

Ashton Lee's Testimony Before State Senate Education Committee On AB 1266

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Abstract

Ashton Lee is a transgender youth who attends California's Manteca High School. Back on June 12th, he testified before the California State Senate Education Committee on the School Success and Opportunity Act (AB 1266). I believe it's important to document the harm trans youth when they're not supported and accommodated in our state's public schools [...]

Article

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I believe it's important to document the harm trans youth when they're not supported and accommodated in our state's public schools. So with that thought in mind, here is the text of Ashton Lee's testimony:

Hello members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Ashton Lee, and I'm a 16-year-old transgender boy for Manteca High School. Transgender means I was assigned female at birth but I identify as male.

My school separates 10th grade boys into core or team sports, and 10th grade girls into fundamentals of dance or aerobics. I've been systematically placed in a class of all girls. Every day, going to that class I'm reminded that I'm different. I leave feeling alone and devastated, making it extremely hard to focus on my other classes. I've had two desperate attempts to change my schedule, and get out of the class, but my school was unwilling to change my schedule. When I came out as transgender, it felt amazing to finally realize, embrace, and live as my true self. For years I hid who I really am from everyone because I just wanted to fit in -- and it made me miserable.

It feels equally devastating for my school to deny my identity and try so hard to make me live as someone I'm not.

The worst part is I don't have any choice. No options. Gym class is required for graduation, and I'm not allowed to participate in it as myself. And, if I don't go I won't be able to graduate high school. But, if I do go I'm forced to lie about who I truly am.

I'm falling behind in my other classes because I feel so alone and stigmatized.

I've got two years left of high school. I'll put this simply: I, and the many other transgender youth in California NEED the School Success and Opportunity Act. Other districts in California allow

transgender students to fully participate in schools as themselves, and they've only had success with the policy...no problems have arisen.

Students like me are struggling daily -- our education and health at risk. And, there is no reason that should be happening. Pleased vote 'yes' on AB 1266, and help make our schools places where everyone can succeed.

Thank you for your time.

But, there is a reason why trans youth may continue to needlessly suffer. It's people like the executive director of the Pacific Justice Institute, Brad Dacus, who is using the weeks after the Pacific Justice's press release their debunked initial story that a trans girl was harassing other girls, it's still be reported as new news by the American Family Association's OneNewsNow.

And, of course, OneNewsNow, which appears to have just rewrote the Pacific Justice Institute's second press release, repeated the belief that transgender activists are in "damage control mode" "because they know how explosive and damaging to their cause this story is."

No one in conservative media is reporting what trans youth, such as Ashton Lee, say about AB 1266 -- it just doesn't fit their "bathroom bill" meme where trans females are portrayed as predatory monsters. And disgustingly in the Pacific Justice Institute's attempt to demonize trans youth in general, the Pacific Justice Institute's adult Brad Dacus is attacking a 16-year-old trans minor to spread a debunked tall tail in support of their attempt to repeal AB 1266.

Related:

* GSA's essay by Christine Lee, Ashton Lee's mother, entitled Standing With My Son

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